

VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE



POETRY



**PRINCIPLES, PROPOSITIONS &
DISCUSSIONS
FOR LAND & FREEDOM**

An introductory word to the 'anarchivé'
"Anarchy is Order!"

*I must Create a System or be enslav'd by
another Man's.
I will not Reason & Compare: my business
is to Create'*
(William Blake)

During the 19th century, anarchism has developed as a result of a social current which aims for freedom and happiness. A number of factors since World War I have made this movement, and its ideas, disappear little by little under the dust of history.

After the classical anarchism - of which the Spanish Revolution was one of the last representatives - a 'new' kind of resistance was founded in the sixties which claimed to be based (at least partly) on this anarchism. However this resistance is often limited to a few (and even then partly misunderstood) slogans such as 'Anarchy is order', 'Property is theft',...

Information about anarchism is often hard to come by, monopolised and intellectual; and therefore visibly disappearing. The 'anarchivé' or 'anarchist archive' Anarchy is Order (in short **A.O**) is an attempt to make the '**principles, propositions and discussions**' of this tradition available again for anyone it concerns. We believe that these texts are part of our own

heritage. They don't belong to publishers, institutes or specialists.

These texts thus have to be available for all anarchists and other people interested. That is one of the conditions to give anarchism a new impulse, to let the 'new anarchism' outgrow the slogans. This is what makes this project relevant for us: we must find our roots to be able to renew ourselves. We have to learn from the mistakes of our socialist past. History has shown that a large number of the anarchist ideas remain standing, even during the most recent social-economic developments.

'Anarchy Is Order' does not make profits, everything is spread at the price of printing- and papercosts. This of course creates some limitations for these archives.

Everyone is invited to spread along the information we give . This can be done by copying our leaflets, printing from the CD that is available or copying it, emailing the texts ,...Become your own anarchiv!!!

(Be aware though of copyright restrictions. We also want to make sure that the anarchist or non-commercial printers, publishers and authors are not being harmed. Our priority on the other hand remains to spread the ideas, not the ownership of them.)

The anarchive offers these texts hoping that values like **freedom, solidarity and direct action** get a new meaning and will be lived again; so that the struggle continues against the

*'demons of flesh and blood, that sway
scepters down here;
and the dirty microbes that send us dark
diseases and wish to
squash us like horseflies;
and the will-'o-the-wisp of the saddest
ignorance'.
(L-P. Boon)*

The rest depends as much on you as it depends on us. Don't mourn, Organise!

Comments, questions, criticism, cooperation can be send to

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A complete list and updates are available on this address, new texts are always

welcome!!

POETRY OF VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE

Taken from Liberated Existence

(<http://liberated.tao.ca/>)

(<http://www.tao.ca/~denny/poetrydecleyre.htm>)

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AND THOU TOO

The moonlight rolls down like a river,
The silence streams out like a sea;
And far where the eastern winds quiver,
My farewell goes floating to thee.

Like night, when the sunset is fading
And starbeams troop up in the skies,
Through a cold, dark and lonely forever
Gleams the light of the poet eyes.

And sometimes when I am weary, When the
path is thorny and Wild,
I'll look back to the Eyes in the twilight,
Back to the eyes that smiled.

And pray that a wreath like a rainbow
May slip from the beautiful past,
And Crown me again with the sweet, strong
love
And keep me, and hold me fast.

For the way is not strown with petal soft,
It is covered with hearts that weep,
And the wounds I tread touch a deeper source
Than you think it mine to keep.

Down the years I shall move without you,
Yet ever must feel the blow
That caused me a deeper pain to give
Than you will ever know.

For the tears that dropped on my hands that
night
'Neath the mystical shining moon,
Were a sacred dew, consecrated there,
On the rose-altered heart of June.

And the heart that beat against mine like a
bird
That is fluttering, wounded sore,
With it's nest all broken, deserted, torn,
Will beat there forevermore.

But the world moves on, and the piteous Earth
Still groans in the monster pain;
And the star that leads me points onward yet,
Though the red drops fall like rain!

Ah, not to a blaze of light I go,
Nor shouts of a triumph train;
I go down to kiss the dregs of woe,
And drink up the Cup of Pain.

And whether a scaffold or crucifix waits
'Neath the light of my silver star,
I know and I care not: I only know
I shall pause not though it be far.

Though a crucified life or an agonized death,
Though long, or quick and sharp,
I am firmly wrought in the endless thread
Of Destiny's woof and warp.

And I do not shrink, though a wave of pain
Sobs over me now and then,
As I think of those "saddest of all sad words,"

The pitiful "might have been."

"It might have been"--it is not to be;
And the tones of your "swan's farewell"
Ring sadly, solemnly deep to me
Like the voice of a sobbing bell.

Ay, gather your petals and take them back
To the dead heart under the dew;
And crown it again with the red love bloom,
For the dead are always true.

But go not "back to the sediment"
In the slime of the moaning sea,
For a better world belongs to you,
And a better friend to me.

--St. Johns, Michigan, 1888

THE HURRICANE

"We are the birds of the coming storm."--
August Spies

The tide is out, the wind blows off the shore;
Bare burn the white sands in the scorching
sun;
The sea complains, but its great voice is low.

Bitter thy woes, O People,
And the burden
Hardly to be borne!
Wearily grows, O People,
All the aching
Of thy pierced heart, bruised and torn!
But yet thy time is not,
And low thy moaning.
Desert thy sands!
Not yeat is thy breath hot, Vengefully blowing;
It wafts o'er lifted hands.

The tide has turned; the vane veers slowly
round;
Slow clouds are sweeping o'er the blinding
light;
White crests curl on the sea--its voice grows
deep.

Angry thy heart, O People!
And its bleeding
Fire-tipped with rising hate!
Thy clasped hands part, O People,
For thy praying Warmed not the desolate!
God did not hear thy moan:

Now it is swelling
To a great drowning cry;
A dark wind-cloud, a groan, Now backward
veering
From that deaf sky!

The tide flows in, the wind roars from the
depths,
The whirled-White sand heaps with the foam-
white waves;
Thundering the sea rolls o'er its shell-crunched
wall!

Strong is thy rage, O People,
In its fury
Hurling thy tyrants down!
Thow metest wage, O People.
Very swiftly,
Now that thy hate is grown:
Thy time at last is come;
Thou heapest anguish,
Where thou thyself wert bare!
No longer to thy dumb.
God clasped and kneeling.
Thou answerest thine own prayer.

--Sea Isle City, New Jersey, August 1889

AT THE GRAVE IN WALDHEIM

Quiet they lie in their shrouds of rest,
Their lids kissed close 'neath the lips of peace;
Over each pulseless and painless breast
The hands lie folded and softly pressed,
As a dead dove presses a broken nest;
Ah, broken hearts were the price of these!

The lips of their anguish are cold and still,
For them are the clouds and the gloms al past;
No longer the woe of the world can thrill
The chords of those tender hearts, or fill
The silent dead- house! The "people's will"
Has snapped asunder the strings at last.

"The people's will!" Ah, in years to come,
Dearly ye'll weep that ye did not save!
Do you not hear now the muffled drum,
The trampling feet and the ceaseless hum,
Of the million marchers--trembling, dumb,
In their tread to a yawning, giant grave?

And yet, ah! yet there's a rift of white!
'Tis breaking over the martyrs' shrine!
Halt there, ye dommed ones--it scates the
night,
As lightning darts from its scabbard bright
And sweeps the face of the sky with light!
"No more shall be spilled out the blood-red
wine!"

These are the words it has written there,
Keen as the lance of the northern mourn;
The sword of Justice gleams in its glare,

And the arm of Justice, upraised and bare,
Is true to strike, aye, 'tis strong to dare;
It will fall where the curse of our land is born.

No more shall the necks of the nations be
crused,
No more to dark Tyranny's throne bend the
knee;
No more in abjection to ground to the dust!
By the brave heart-beats stilled, by the brave
voices hushed,
We swear that humanity yet shall be free!

--Pittsburg, 1889

THE DIRGE OF THE SEA

Come! Come! I have waited long!
My love is old,
My arms are strong;
I would woo thee, now,
With the wave-kiss cold
On they pallid brow;

Thou art mine, thou art mine! My very own!
Thine ears shall hear
My eternal moan;
Always near
Thou'lt feel my lips,
And the bathing tear
Where my sorrow drips.

Thou, my king forever, behold thy throne!
Reign in thy majesty, all alone.

None! None wept for thee,
Nearing the verge
Of eternity!
I, thy solemn dirge Will chant for eye
Wide as the wave-merge
Into sky.

I love thee! Thou art my chosen own!
Thy heart, like mine,
Was cold as stone,
Thine eyes could shine
Like my blue waves fair;
Thy lips, like wine,
Curved to kisses rare!!

Hard as my waves were the eyes that shone,
And the wine as deadly! Come, love, alone!
Float! Float, on the swelling wave!
Long is the hearse,
Wide the grave;
Thy pall is a curse
From the fading shore
A broken verse
From a heart wrung sore!

"Live's stream's wreck-strown!" Ah, like my
own!
The words are low
As a dying groan;
The voice thrills so,
It might rouse thy breast
With pity's glow,
Wert thou like the rest!
But thou, my hero, wert never known
To feel as a human; thou stoodst, alone.

Down! Down! Behold the wrecks!
I strew the deep
With these human specks!
No faith I keep With their moral trust;
See how I heap
Their crumbling dust!

I sneered in their faces, my own, my own,
As they knelt to pray
When the ships went down;
I flung my spray
In their dying eyes,
And laughed at the way
It drowned their cries!

On the shore they heard the exultant tone,
And said: "The Sea laughs." Ah, I laughed
alone.

Now! Now, we twain shall go,
Love-locked,
Laughing so! The fools ye mocked
With your tender eyes,
The trusts ye rocked With your cradling lies,

E'en like these wretches, my own, my own,
Shall rot in clay
Or crumbled bone,
Thou shalt hold thy way,
Day-kissed and fair,
Where the wild waves play
In the sun-thick air!

My arms, my kiss, my tears, my moan,
Ye shall know for aye, where we wander lone.
Love! Love! Thou wert like to me!
Thy luring gaze
Rolled relentlessly!
The marsh-light blaze
To some human soul,
Down the darkn'ing maze
To Ruin's goal.

Ah, how ye crushed them, my beautiful own!
Like whistled leaves
Around thee stown,
Whirled the dead beliefs
Of each long-mourned life!
Here, no one grieves:

Neither tears nor strife

Appeal to the Sea, where its wrecks are
thrown!

Thou shalt stand in their midst, and smile,
alone!

Laugh! Laugh! O form of light!
Death hides
Thy faithless sight!
The flowing tides
Of thy heart are still;
Yet are wrecks thy brides,
For it is my will

That that which on earth made thy heaven,
my own,
May strew around
Thy eternal throne!
The gurgling sound
Of the dying cry,
The gushing wound
Of heart-agony,

Were thy joy in life! Now the Sea makes
known
Thy realm in death! Thy heaven, alone!

Years! Years, ye shall mix with me!
Ye shall grow a part
Of the laughing Sea;
Of the moaning heart
Of the glittered wave
Of the sun-gleam's dart
In the ocean-grave.

Fair, cold, and faithless wert thou, my own!
For that I love
Thy heart of stone!
From the heights above
To the depths below,
Where dread things move,

There is naught can show
A life so trustless! Proud be thy crown!
Ruthless, like none, save the Sea, alone!

April 1891

I AM

I am! The ages on the ages roll:
And what I am, I was, and I shall be:
by slow growth filling higher Destiny,
And Widening, ever, to the widening Goal.
I am the Stone that slept; down deep in me
That old, old sleep has left its centurine trace;
I am the plant that dreamed; and lo! still see
That dream-life dwelling on the Human Face.
I slept, I dreamed, I wakened: I am Man!
The hut grows Palaces; the depths breed light;
Still on! Forms pass; but Form yields kinglier
Might!
The singer, dying where his song began,
In Me yet lives; and yet again shall he
Unseal the lips of greater songs To Be;
For mine the thousand tongues of Immortality.

January 1892

LOVE'S GHOST

Among the leaves and the rolls of moonlight,
The moon, which weaves lace on the road-
white

Among the winds, and among the flowers,
Our blithe feet wander --life is ours!

Life is ours, and life is loving;
All our powers are locked in loving;
Hearts, and eyeys, and lips are moving
With the ecstasy of loving.

Ah! the roses! they are blooming;
And the June air, throbbing, tuning,
Sings of Love's eternal summer—
Chants of Joy, life's only Comer;
And we clsp our hands together,
Singing in the war, sweet weather;
Kissing, thrilling with caressing,
All the sweet from Love's rose pressing.

Ah, so easy!--Earth is Heaven,--
Darkness, shadows, do not live;
Like the rose our hearts are given,
Like the rose whos blom is given,
To the sun-gold, and the heaven.
Not because it wills or wishes,
But because 'tis life to give.

Dreary, dreary, snow-filled darkness!
Heavy, weary, voiceless darkness!

We have drifted, drifted, drifted, you and I,
Far apart as snows and roses, sea and sky.

We have drifted, drifted, drifted, far asunder,
Any my lonely voice uplifted in sad wonder,
Heavy with its own sad calls.

All your love was of the summer;
Born to die among the roses,
Wither, scatter, like the roses,
Leaving me the gray-browed Comer,
With the ashes on his forehead,
And the winter in his hair,
With the footsteps slow and solemn
Going down the endless stair,
Joy is gone and you, my Lover,
Gone in other ways to hover;
gone among the summer places,
Gone to seek for summer faces.

Bright-faced Joy was not for me;
Born among the snows and pines,
Gray-faced Sorrow was to be
Imaged in my mournful lines.

Love, not born for cold and sorrow,
Only for the sweet sunshine,
I shall keep your face forever
Hidden in this heart of mine.
In its light, one spot will brighten,
Keeping fair the sacred tomb;
Like old moonlight it will whiten
The inviolable room;
Like the moonlight it will whiten,
Softly, all the darkened room;
And the broken stalk may put forth
Memory's ghost of Love's old bloom.

March 1892

LIFE OR DEATH

A Soul, half through the Gate, said unto Life:
"What dost thou offer me?" And Life replied:
"Sorrow, unceasing struggle, disappointment;
after these
Darkness and silence." The Soul said unto
Death:
"What dost thou offer me?" And Death replied:
"In the beginning what Life gives at last."
Turning to Life: "And if I live and struggle?"
"Others shall live and struggle after thee
Counting it easier where thou hast passed."
"And by their struggles?" "Easier place shall
be
For others, still to rise to keener pain
Of conquering Agony!" "and what have I
To do with all these others? Who are they?"
"Yourself!" "And all who went before?"
"Yourself."
"The darkness and the silence, too, have end?"
"They end in light and sound; peace ends in
pain,
Death ends in Me, and thou must glide from
Self
To Self, as light to shade and shade to light
again.
Choose!" The Soul, sighing, answered: "I will
live."

Philadelphia, May 1892

THE TOAST OF DESPAIR

We have cried--and the gods are silent;
We hve trusted--and been betrayed;
We have loved--and the fruit was ashes;
We have given--the gift was weighed.

We know that the heavens are empty,
That friendship and lvoe are names;
That truth is an ashen cinder,
The end of life's burnt-out flames.

Vainly and long we have waited,
Through the night of the human roar,
For a single song on the harp of Hope,
Or a ray from a day-lit shore.

Songs aye come floating, marvelous sweet,
And bow-dyed flashes gleam;
But the sweets are Lies, and the weary feet
Run after a marsh-light beam.

In the hour of our need the song departs,
And the sea-moans of sorrow swell;
The siren mocks with a gurgling laugh
That is drowned in the deep death-knell.

The light we chased with our stumbling feet
As the goals of happier years,
Swings high and low and vanishes—
The bow-dyes were of our tears.

God is a lie, and Faith is a lie,
And a tenfold lie is Love;
Life is a problem without a why,

And never a thing to prove.

it adds, and subtracts, and multiplies,
And divides without aim or end;
Its answers all false, though false-named true

—

Wife, husband, lover, friend.

We know it now, and we care no more;
What matters life or death?
We tiny insects emerge from earth,
Suffer, and yield our breath.

Like ants we crawl on our brief sand-hill,
Dreaming of "mighty things"—
Lo, they crunch, like shells in the ocean's
wrath,
In the rush of Time's awful wings.

The sun smiles gold, and the plants white,
And a billion stars smile, still;
Yet, fierce as we, each wheels toward eath,
And cannot stay his will.

The build, ye fools, your mighty things,
That time shall set at naught;
Grow warm with the song the sweet Lie sings,
And the false bow your tears have wrought.

For us, a truce to Gods, loves, and hopes,
And a pledge to fire and wave;
A swifter whirl to the dance of death,
And a loud huzza for the Grave!

Philadelphia, 1892

MARY WOLLSTONE CRAFT

The dust of a hundred years
Is on thy breast,
And thy day and thy night of tears
Are centurine rest.
Thou to whom joy was dumb,
Life a broken rhyme,
Lo, thy smiling time is come,
And our weeping time.
Thou who hadst sponge and myrrh
And a bitter cross,
Smile, for the day is here
That we know our loss;--
Loss of thine undone deed,
Thy unfinished song,
Th' unspoken word for our need,
Th' unrighted wrong;
Smile, for we weep, we weep,
For the unsoothed pain,
The unbound wound burned deep,
That we might gain.
Mother of sorrowful eyes
In the dead old days,
Mother of many sighs,
Of pain-shod ways;
Mother of resolute feet
Through all the thorns,
Mother soul-strong, soul-sweet,--
Lo, after storms
Have broken and beat thy dust
For a hundred years,
Thy memory is made just,

And the just man hears.

Thy children kneel and repeat:
"Though dust be dust,
Though sod and coffin and sheet
And moth and rust
Have folded and molded and pressed,
Yet they cannot kill;
In the heart of the world at rest
She liveth still."

Philadelphia, 27th April 1893

JOHN P. ALTGELD

(After an incarceration for six long years in Joliet state prison for an act of which they were entirely innocent, namely, the throwing of the Hyamarket bomb, in Chicago, May 4th, 1886, Oscar Neebe, Michael Scwab, and Samuel Fielden, were liberated by Gov. Altgeld, who thus sacrificed his political career to an act of justice.)

There was a tableau! Liberty's clear light
Shone never on a braver scene than that,
Here was a prison, there a Man, who sat
High in the halls of State! Beyond, the might
Of Ignorance and mobs whose hireling Press
Yells at their bidding like the slaver's hounds,
Ready with coarse caprice to curse or bless,
To make or unmake rulers!--Lo, there sounds
A grating of the doors! And three poor men
Helpless and hated, having nought to give,
Come from their long-sealed tomb, look up,
and live,
And thank this Man that they are free again.
And He--to all the world this Man dares say:
"Curse as you will! I have been just this day."

Philadelphia, June 1893

THE FEAST OF VULTURES

(As the three atarchists, Vaillant, Henry and Caserio,
were led to their several executions, a voice from the
prison cried loudly, "Vive l'anarchie!" Through watch
and ward the cry escaped, and no man owned the voice,
but the cry is still resounding through the world.)

A moan in the gloam in the air-peaks heard—
The Bird of Omen--the wild, fierce Bird,
Aflight
In the night,
Like a whizz of light,
Arrowy winging before the storm,
Far away flinging
The whistling, singing,
White-curdled drops, wind-blown and warm,
From its beating, flapping,
Thunderous wings;
Crashing and clapping
The split night swings,
And rocks and totters,
Bled of its levin,
Atd reels and mutters
A curse to Heaven!
Reels and mutters and rolls and dies,
With a wild light streaking its black, blind
eyes.

Far, Far, Farw
Through the red, mad morn,
Like a hurtling star,
Through the air upborne,
The Herald-Singer,
The Terror-Bringer,

Speeds--and behind, through the cloud-rags
torn,
Gather and wheel a million wings,
Clanging as iron where the hammer rings;
The whipped sky shivers,
The White Gate shakes,
The ripped throne quivers,
The dumb God wakes,

And feels in his heart the talon-stings.
"Ruin,!Ruin!" the Whirlwind cries,
And it leaps at his throat and tears his eyes;
"Death for death, as ye long have dealt;
The heads of your victims your heads shall
pelt;
The blood ye wrung to get drunk upon,
Drink, and be poisoned! On, Herald, on!"

Behold, behold,
How a moan is grown!
A cry hurled high 'gainst a scaffold's joist!
The Voice of Defiance--the roud, wild Voice!
Whirled
Through the world,
A smoke-wreath curled
(Breath 'round hot kisses) around a fire!
See! the ground hisses
With red-streaming blood-clots of long-frozen
ire,
Waked by the flying
Wild voice as it passes;
Groaning and crying,
The surge of the masses
Rolls and flashes
With thunderous roar—

Seams and lashes
The livid shore—
Seams and lashes and crunches and beats,
And drags a ragged wall to its howling
retreats!

Swift, swift, swift,
'Thwart the blood-rain's fall,
Through the fire-shot rift
Of the broken wall,
The prophet-crying
The storm-song sighing,
Flies--and grom under Night's lifted pall,
Swarming, menace ten million darts,
Uplifting fragments of human shards!

Ah, white teeth chatter,
And dumb jaws fall,
While winged fires scatter
Till gloom gulfs all
Save the boom of the cannon that storm the
forts
That the people bombard with their comrades'
hearts;
"Vengeance! Vengeance!" the voices scream,
And the vulture pinions whirl and stream!
"Knife for knife, as ye long have dealt;
The edge ye whetted for us be felt,
Ye chopper o necks, on your own, on your
own!
Bare it, Coward! On, Prophet, on!"

Behold how high
Rolls a prison cry!

Philadelphia, August 1894

Anarchist martyrs Auguste Vaillant, Emile Henry and Sante Geronimo Caserio were European exemplars of "propaganda by the deed."

THE SUICIDE'S DEFENSE

(Of all the stupidities wherewith the law-making power has oigned its own incapacity for dealing with the disorders of society, none appears so utterly stupid as the law which punishes an attempted suicide. To the question "What have you to say in your defense?" I conceive the poor wretch might reply as follows.)

To say in my defense? Defense of what?
Defense to whom? And why defense at all?
Have I wronged any? Let that one accuse!
Some priest there mutters I "have outraged God!"
Let God then try me, and let none dare judge
Himself as fit to put Heaven's ermine on!
Again I say, let the wronged one accuse.
Aye, silence! There is none to answer me.
And whom could I, a homeness, friendless
tramp,
To whom all doors are shut, all hearts are
locked,
All hands withheld--whom could I wrong,
indeed
By taking that which benefited none
And menaced all?
Aye, since ye will it so,
Know then your risk. But mark, 'tis not
defense,
'Tis accusation that I hurl at you.
See to't that ye prepare your own defense.
My life, I say, Is an eternal thleat
To you and yours; and therefore it were well
To have foreborne your unasked services.
And why? Because I hate you! Every drop

of blood thah circles in your plethoric veins
Was wrung from out the gaunt and sapless
trunks
Of men like me. who in your cursed mills
Were crushed like grapes within the wine-
press
ground.

To us ye leave the empty skin of life;
The heart of it, the sweet of it, ye pour
To fete your dogs and mistresses withal!
Your mistresses! Our daughters! Bought, for
bread,
To grace the flesh that once was father's arms!

Yes, I accuse you that ye murdered me!
Ye killed the Man--and this that speaks to you
Is but the beast that ye have made of me!
What! Is it life to creep and crawl an beg,
And slink for shelter where rats congregate?
And for one's ideal dream of a fat meal?
Is it, then, life, to group like pigs in sties,
And bury decency in common filth,
Because, forsooth, your income must be made,
Though human flesh rot in your plague-rid
dens?
Is it, then, life, to wait another's nod,
For leave to turn yourself to gold for him?
Would it me life to you? And was I less
Than you? Vas I not born with hopes and
dreams
Ane pains and passions even as were you?

But these ye have denied. Ye seized the ealth,
Though it was none of yours, and said:
"Hereon

Shall none rest, walk or work, till first to me
Ye render tribute!" Every art of man,
Born to make light of the burdens of the world,
Ye also seized, and made a tenfold curse
To crush the man beneath the thing he made.
Houses, machines, and lands--all, all are yours;
And us you do not need. When we ask work
Ye stake your heads. Homes?--Ye vict us.
Bread?—

"Here, officer, this fellow's begging. Jail's
the place for him!" After the stripes, what
next?

Poison!--I took it!--Now you say 'twas sin
To take this life which troubled you so much.
Sin to escape insult, starvation, brands
Of felony, inflicted for the crime
Of asking food! Ye hypocrites! Within
Your secret hearts the sin is that I failed!
Because I failed ye judge me to the stripes.
And the hard tail denied when I was free.
So be it. But beware!--a Prison cell,s
An evil bed to grow morality!
Black swamps breed black miasms; sickly soils
Yield poison fruit; snakes warmed to life will
sting.
This time I was content to go alone;
Perchance the next I shall not be so kind.

Philadelphia, September 1894

GERMINAL

(The last word of Angiolillo)

Germinal!--The Field of Mars is plowing,
And hard the steel that cuts, and hot the
breath
Of the great Oxen, straining flanks and bowing
Beneath his goad, who guides the share of
Death.

Germinal!--The Dragon's teeth are sowing,
And stern and white the sower flings the seed
He shall not gather, though full swift the
growing;
Straight down Death's furrow treads, and does
not heed.

Germinal!--The Helmet Heads are springing
Far up the Field of Mars in gleaming files;
With wild war notes the bursting earth is
ringing.

Within his grave the sower sleeps, and smiles.

London, October 1897

Emile Zola's novel *Germinal* (1885) was an important influence on anarchists in the nineteenth century. Michele Angiolillo was a young Italian anarchist who, as a protest against the Spanish government's practice of torturing its political opponents' shot and killed Spain's Prime Minister in August 1897.

THE ROAD BUILDERS

("Who built the beautiful roads?" queried a friend of the present order, as we walked one day along the macadamized driveway of Fairmount Park.)

I saw them toiling in the blistering sun,
Their dull, dark faces leaning toward the
stone,
Their knotted fingers grasping the rude tools,
Their rounded shoulders narrowing in their
chest,
The sweat dro's dripping in great painful
beads.
I saw one fall, his forehead on the rock,
The helpless hand still cluthcing at the spade,
The slack mouth full of earth.

And he was dead.
His comrades getnly turned his face, until
The fierce sun glittered hard upon his eyes,
Wide open, staring at the cruel sky.
The blood yet ran upon the jagged stone;
But it was ended. He was quite, quite dead:
Driven to death beneath the burning sun,
Driven to death upon the road he built.

He was no "hero", he; a poor, black man,
Taking "the will of God" and asking naught;
Think of him thus, when next your horse's feet
Strike out the flint spark from the gleaming
road;
Think that for this, this common thing, The
Road,
A human creature died; 'tis a blood gift,

To an o'erreaching world that does not thank.
Ignorant, mean and soulless was he? Well—
Still human; and you drive upon his corpse.

Philadelphia, 24 July 1900

AVE ET VALE

Comrades, what matter the watch-night tells
That a New Year comes or goes?
What to us are the crashing bells
That clang out the Century's close?

What to us is the gala dress?
The whirl of the dancing feet?
The glitter and blare in the laughing press,
And din of the merry street?

Do we not know that our brothers die
In the cold and the dark tonight?
Shelterless faces turned toward the sky
Will not see the New Year's light?

Wandering children, lonely, lost,
Drift away on the human sea,
While the price of their lives in a glass is
tossed
And drunk in a revelry!

Ah, know we not in their feasting halls
Where the loud laugh echoes again,
That brick and stone in the mortared walls
Are bones of murdered men?

Slowly murdered! By day and day,
The beauty and strength are reft,
Till the Man is sapped and sucked away,
And a Human Rind is left!

A Human Rind, with old, thin hair,
And old thin voice to pray
For alms in the bitter winter air—
A knife at his heart always.

And the pure in heart are impure in flesh
For the cost of a little food:
Lo, when the Gleaner of Time shall thresh,
Let these be accounted good.

For these are they who in bitter blame
Eat the bread whose salt is sin;
Whose bosoms are burned with the scarlet
shame,
Till their hearts are seared within.

The cowardly jests of a hundred years
Will be thrown where they pass tonight,
Too callous for hate, and too dry for tears,
The saddest of human blight.

Do we forget them, these broken ones,
That our watch tonight is set?
Nay, we smile in the face of the year that
comes
Because we do not forget.

We do not forget the tramp on the track,
Thrust out in the wind-swept waste,
The curses of Man upon his back,

And the curse of God in his face.

The stare in the eyes of the buried man
Face down in the fallen mine;
The despair of the child whose bare feet ran
To tread out the rich man's wine;

The solemn light in the dying gaze
Of the babe at the empty breast,
The wax accusation, the somber glaze
Of its frozen and rigid rest;

They are all in the smile that we turn to the
east
To welcome the Century's dawn;
They are all in our greeting to Night's high
priest,
As we bid the Old Year begone.

Begone and have done, and go down and be
dead
Deep drowned in your sea of tears!
We smile as you die, for we wait the red
Morn-gleam of a hundred-years

That shall see the end of the age-old wrong—
The reapers that have not sown—
The reapers of men with their sickles strong
Who gather, but have not strown.

For the earth shall be his and the fruits thereof
And to him the corn and wine,
Who labors the hills with an even love
And knows not "thine and mine.

And the silk shall be to the hand that weaves.
The pearl to him who dives,
The home to the builder; and all life's sheaves
To the builder of human lives.

And none go blind that another see.
Or die that another live;
And none insult with a charity
That is not theirs to give.

For each of his plenty shall freely share
And take at another's hand:
Equals breathing the Common Air
And toiling the Common Land.

A dream? A vision? Aye, what you will;
Let it be to you as it seems:
Of this Nightmare Real we have our fill;
Tonight is for "pleasant dreams."

Dreams that shall waken the hope that sleeps
And knock at each torpid Heart
Till it beat drum taps, and the blood that
creeps
Mith a lion's spring upstart!

For who are we to be bound and drowned
In this river of human blood?
Who are we to lie in a swoond,
Half sunk in the river mud?

Are we not they who delve and blast
And hammer and build and burn/
Without us not a nail made fast!
Not a wheel in the world should turn!

Must we, the Giant, await the grace
That is dealt by the puny hand
Of him who sits in the feasting place,
While we, his Blind Jest, stand

Between the pillars? Nay, not so:
Aye, if such things were true,
Better were Ga;a again, to show
What the giant's rage may do!

Bet yet not this: it were wiser far
To enter the feasting hall
And say to the Masters, "These things are
Not for you alone, but all."

And this shall be in the Century
that opes on our efes tonight;
So here's to the struggle, if it must be,
And to him who fights the fight.

And here's to the dauntless, jubilant throat
That loud to its Comrade sings,
Till over the earth shrills the mustering note,
And the World Strike's signal rings.

Philadelphia, 1st January 1901

MARSH-BLOOM

To Gaetano Bresci

Requiem, requiem, requiem,
Blood-red blossom of poison stem
Broken for Man,
Swanmp-sunk leafage and dungeon-bloom,
Seeded bearer of royal doom,
What now is the ban?

What to thee is the island grave?
With desert wind and desolate wave
Will they silence Death?
Can they weight thee now with the heaviest
stone?
Can they lay aught on thee with "Be alone,"
That hast conquered breath?

Lo, "it is finished"--a man for a king!
Mark you well who have done this thing:
The flower has roots;
Bitter and rank grow the things of the sea;
Ye shall know what sap ran thick in the tree
When ye pluck its fruits.

Requiem, requiem, requiem,
Sleep on, sleep on, accused of them
Who work our pain;
A wild Marsh-blomm shall blow again
From a buried root in the slime of men,
On the day of the Great Red Rain.

Philadelphia, July 1901

Italian anarchist Gaetano Bresci assassinated
King Umberto in 1900

"LIGHT UPON WALDHEIM"

(The figure on the monument over the grave of the
Chicago martyrs in Waldheim Cemetery is a warrior
woman, dropping with her left hand a crown upon the
forehead of a fallen man just past his agony, and with
her right drowsing a dagger from her bosom.)

Light upon Waldheim! The earth is gray;
A bitter wind is driving from the north;
The stone is cold, and strange cold whispers
say;
"What do ye here with Death? Go forth! Go
forth!"

Is this thy word, o Mother, with stern eyes,
Crowning thy dead with stone-caressing
touch?
May we not weep o'er him that martyred lies,
Slain in our name, for that he loved us much?

May we not linger till the day is broad?
Nay, none are stirring in this stinging dawn—
None but poor wretches that make no moan to
God:
What use are these, O thou with dagger
drawn?

"Go forth, go forth! Stang not to weep for
these,
Till, weakened with your weeping, like the
snow
Ye melt, dissolving in a coward peace!"

Light upon Waldheim! Brother, let us go!

London, October 1897

WRITTEN--IN—RED

To Our Living Dead in Mexico's Struggle

Written in red their protest stands,
For the gods of the World to see;
On the dooming wall their bodiless hands
have blazoned "Upharsin," and flaring brands
Illumine the message: "Seize the lands!
Open the prisons and make men free!"
Flame out the living words of the dead
Written--in--red.

gods of the eWorld! Their mouths are dumb!
Your guns have spoken and they are dust.
But the shrouded Living, whose hearts were
numb,
have felt the beat of a wakening drum
Within them sounding-the Dead men's tongue
—

Calling: "Smite off the ancient rust!"
Have beheld "Resurrexit," the word of the
Dead,
Written--in--red.

Bear it aloft, O roaring, flame!
Skyward aloft, where all may see.
Slaves of the World! Our caose is the same;
One is the immemorial shame;
One is the struggle, and in One name—
Manhood--we battle to set men free.
"Uncurse us the Land!" burn the words of the
Dead,
Written--in--red.

Voltairine deCleyre's last poem.